

AN ACT regarding higher education.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Criminal Code of 1961 is amended by adding
Section 17-2.5 as follows:

(720 ILCS 5/17-2.5 new)

Sec. 17-2.5. False academic degrees.

(a) It is unlawful for a person to knowingly manufacture or produce for profit or for sale a false academic degree, unless the degree explicitly states "for novelty purposes only".

(b) It is unlawful for a person to knowingly use a false academic degree for the purpose of obtaining employment or admission to an institution of higher learning or admission to an advanced degree program at an institution of higher learning or for the purpose of obtaining a promotion or higher compensation in employment.

(c) Sentence. A person who violates this Section is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(d) In this Section:

"False academic degree" means a certificate, diploma, transcript, or other document purporting to be issued by an institution of higher learning or purporting to indicate that a person has completed an organized academic program of study at an institution of higher learning when the person has not completed the organized academic program of study indicated on the certificate, diploma, transcript, or other document.

"Institution of higher learning" means a public or private college, university, or community college located in the State of Illinois that is authorized by the Board of Higher Education or the Illinois Community College Board to

issue post-secondary degrees, or a public or private college, university, or community college located anywhere in the United States that is or has been legally constituted to offer degrees and instruction in its state of origin or incorporation.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.